

Clauses

- 6a.** A **clause** is a word group that contains a verb and its subject and that is used as a sentence or as part of a sentence.

A clause that expresses a complete thought is called an **independent clause**. A clause that does not make sense by itself is called a **subordinate clause**.

NOT A CLAUSE I enjoy **writing in purple ink**. [This word group is not a clause because it does not contain both a verb and its subject.]

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE I **write** when I am angry or confused.

SUBORDINATE CLAUSE I write **when I am angry or confused**.

EXERCISE A For each of the following sentences, identify the subject and the verb in the underlined part of the sentence. Above the subject write *S*, and above the verb write *V*.

Example 1. At the local bookstore I bought a blank book.
S V

1. An antique map of the world is on the cover of my journal.
2. To me, this map represents the undiscovered areas of my mind.
3. When I read entries from months ago, I usually learn something about myself.
4. I often write about experiences because I need an outlet for my emotions.
5. I vent my frustrations in writing, and I feel better afterwards.

EXERCISE B For each of the following sentences, identify the underlined word group by writing above it *C* for *clause* or *NC* for *not a clause*.

Example 1. Writing down the angry comments that I think of is better than saying them aloud to a friend.
NC

6. If I let a few days go by, I usually do not feel the same anger.
7. I then wonder what would have happened if I had actually said those things aloud!
8. During the past two years, I have filled four blank books with journal entries.
9. I know that many fascinating novelists and poets kept journals.
10. Sometimes the writer will use his or her own experiences to inspire a story.
11. Although I do not enjoy feeling sadness or fear, I am able to write about them convincingly.
12. I can write convincingly because I have experienced these emotions myself.
13. Several of my friends have told me that my stories should be published.
14. Not even my best friend, whom I have known for three years, has ever read my journal.
15. I believe that everyone deserves a certain amount of privacy.